1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

precipitate it into a boiling pot. He also describes the slippery path from which it may fall into a swamp, where a huge crab awaits it (Nimuendajú, 1914, p. 372). 764 775

But at last the soul arrives at an underworld in the west, where it is day during our night, and where the forests teem with tapirs, deer, and other game. The souls of the aged become young again and live for the span of a human life. After a second death, the soul turns into a small insect, generally a mosquito or an ant, whose death ends everything; for this reason the *Caingang* never kill these insects (Baldus, 1937 c, p. 49).

WARFARE

A man who has been offended by some member of the community stands in front of his hut and in a loud voice enumerates all his grievances, sometimes bursting into a chant. He ends with threats against his enemy who, in the meantime, behaves in the same manner on the other side of the camp. After reciprocal abuses that often last a whole night, the challenger, followed by a group of supporters, advances toward the offender, who is immediately assisted by his own partisans. Both factions, armed with wooden clubs, fight a pitched battle, but are careful not to kill anybody. The sham battles of the *Caingang* have been described by many observers and may well be formalized brawls which have been interpreted as sportive games. 578 627

Feuds between *Caingang* groups may develop into regular warfare. When one group engages another, the members of the Kadnyerú moity subdivision always form the first line. The Kamé constitute the second line and enter the fight as a reserve to take the place of the exhausted Kadnyerú. Battles between related groups are always preceded by exchanges of insults and by other demonstrations of anger. Although no weapons but cudgels are used, blows are so lustily administered that many are seriously wounded or killed. 628 726 [616] [411]

Wars against foreign tribes or the Whites were less strictly patternized. The *Caingang*, like all Indians, relied mainly on surprise attacks carried on at dawn. After a general discharge of arrows, the warriors, armed with their clubs, rushed against the enemy (Horta Barbosa, 1913, p. 42). 726 648

Women and children were generally spared and were adopted by the victorious group. They cut off the heads of slain enemies but did not keep them as trophies. 727

ETIQUETTE

When a *Caingang* visits another village, he hides in the vicinity until able to announce his presence to some relative. The host receives him with his face covered with a cloth and does not look at his guest until 574 576

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

Analysis

628 The most striking single feature of Kaingáng disintegration is the contrast between the warm, highly affective relationships within the "families" and the uninhibited ferocity of the behavior of the members toward all outsiders. Within their own circle of relatives and companions the Kaingáng will endure a high degree of personal discomfort to avoid a quarrel, but toward "other" groups of their "own people" their overwhelming desire is to shed blood. The result of the nervous insistence on the preservation of internal peace is that serious quarrels scarcely arise, and when they do they are swiftly forgotten or their effects muted. In quarrels over adultery within the extended family the entire brunt of the squabble is usually shifted on to the shoulders of the defaulting spouse, with the result that amity among the men—the very cornerstone of Kaingáng society—is preserved. But adultery by "other men" was fuel to the smoldering flames of long-cherished hate and always precipitated murder. The sexual aggressiveness of man against man never finds full expression within the family, spending itself, at the most, in secret intrigues and surreptitious "home-breaking." But with "other men" it broke out into the frank "taking away" of their women—the deliberate asking for wives who were never refused.

The taking away of wives was a kind of dangerous play indulged in by groups of "other men" when they met. The deadly consequences of such open preempting of sexual rights were known, but they never acted as deterrents. The taking away of women created an atmosphere of fearfulness that formed a perfect medium for the development of states of mind leading to murder. When the children of Wanenggló met with the children of Yokégn the children of Wanenggló took away their wives; but when they had "led them away," the children of Wanenggló feared that their victims wished to kill them to regain their wives and to wipe out the shame of the experience. The children of Yokégn really were secretly enraged and eager to kill their wives' new husbands. The two families dwelt in fear of each other, and it soon became a question only of who would be clever enough to strike the first blow. It turned out that Yokégn was the slyest and in a single night he destroyed Wanenggló and all his children. But nothing like this ever happens within the extended family, where peaceful relations have been the rule for generations.

181 627 Another aspect of this same insistence on preserving peace within the family at any cost is the reluctance to look for trouble. The Kaingáng are utterly unwilling to face a situation pregnant with conflict unless it is thrust under their noses. That is why husbands do not follow their wives around but are content to leave them in camp alone for weeks while they go hunting, and that is why when things are stolen no one prowls around

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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to find who took them. Unless he is confronted with his stolen property a Kaingáng is content to murmur in secret rather than precipitate a quarrel by accusing the thief and demanding the return of the property. The same attitude leads them to make concessions rather than to back their demands with vigorous self-assertion. An aggressive individual can usually obtain his ends simply by asserting his wishes with vigor and insistence—provided he is driven to that extreme. But generally people get what they want if they ask for it, and it is only the aggressive people who ask. The rest take what they get and complain in secret if they are dissatisfied. The Kaingáng avoid any internal quarrel and run with headlong fury into an external one. They are by no means a passive, acquiescent people, but they cannot oppose self-assertion within the extended family.

One day while Chukembégn was out hunting, a few families arrived in camp, and one of them moved into Chukembégn's camp. He and his wife took this eviction without comment and simply moved into my tent. "Why do you let him put you out?" said I. "It's your camp, isn't it?" "Ah," he replied, "if I put him out there would be the deuce of a quarrel." If two self-assertive people happen to desire the same thing the Kaingáng are utterly confused, for generally that kind of situation does not arise. Before I went hunting up the river my cook asked me to get him a deer skin. As we drew near our destination a deer suddenly slipped into the river with that wild and quiet grace that is their special gift. All the Indians were caught unprepared, and before they could fire I slipped a cartridge into my rifle and shot the deer, breaking its leg. The swift current swept it downstream, and it was picked up by Ndíli and killed. In the old days the Kaingáng never used skins for anything, but now that they can sell them to the Brazilians for a few cents the Indians are eager to have them. The old pattern of gain through self-assertion still holds, and the person who gets the skin is the one who asks for it. The practice among the white Brazilians is to give the skin to the owner of the dogs that brought the animal to bay, but the Kaingáng rarely follow the Brazilians in this. Now both Ndíli and I wanted the skin, and Ndíli was a violent and aggressive person. In the past I had always given away the skins of the animals my dogs had flushed, but here was one skin I wanted. At last Chukembégn came over to me and said, "Why don't you give him that skin? He wants it." I refused to surrender. Had I not already given deer skins to Ndíli? Why shouldn't he give me this one? At last he yielded me the skin, only to steal it later.

The most striking feature of the dispute was Chukembégn's failure to understand why I should cling to the skin in the face of the obvious fact that Ndíli wanted it so badly. Another time I wanted to give the skin of a deer my dogs had flushed to the cripple they called Dung, for I felt that

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since he had clubbed the deer he should have the skin. But when I went to hand it to him, Ndíli said, "I want the skin," to which Dung replied, "He wants it; so give it to him." The willingness to yield to aggressiveness, coupled with the indifference to trouble unless it faces one squarely, operates to reduce enormously the number and severity of conflicts within the extended family.

The obsessive interest of the Kaingáng in destruction and murder was all externalized against the "other people," and it was this ability to externalize their obsession that was in part responsible for whatever coherence and security the families preserved. The overpowering urge toward destruction that manifests itself still in the wanton gashing of trees and the killing of the tiniest bird that happens to perch on a limb where stick or stone may reach it is never directed inward against the family but always outward. The function of the feuds, therefore, was twofold, for they served both to gratify the need to destroy and to direct it away from the extended family; and this duality contributed to their perpetuation.

The overwhelming bulk of Kaingáng folklore is murder stories—murder committed in every imaginable way and on all relatives except sons. Stories begin with murders committed for no reason and rehearse over and over again the whole wearisome theme of treachery and retaliation. The interest in the feuds has suffocated any other mythological theme, and instead of the elaborate variations on widespread mythological elements that are so common among many primitive peoples we find that when these elements actually do appear in Kaingáng folklore they are bare, fossilized, neglected plots which the literary imagination has never developed. The one elaborate art form that the Kaingáng have, their folklore, is overwhelmingly concerned with their own destruction.

Perhaps the best proof of the obsessive nature of this trait lies in a split within an extended family which occurred after the Kaingáng were localized on the reservation and which culminated in the murder of Thechá. For years the Kaingáng had committed no murder. Their vendetta enemies had been killed or driven far away, and now the group that had lived in harmony for generations was isolated from the dangers of attack and settled peacefully on the reservation. But Thechá took to saying that he wasn't afraid of anyone, and he was angry at everyone; so "since he was angry with them they became angry with him." They decided to kill him, and one of the plotters was his own first cousin, his father's sister's son, Kovĺ. Now Thechá was a most unusual Kaingáng, for he could not swim. That simplified matters, and one day when he was crossing the river with a number of people—"nine people and five women," as one informant put it—"the canoe tipped over." Nobody tipped it, for such baldness of statement would offend Kaingáng good taste, but "the canoe tipped over" and